

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 1 to 29 as presented in the underlying International Application No. PCT/EP2003/014150 and any intervening claims.

Please add new claims 30 to 48 as indicated in the listing of claims below.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-29 (canceled).

Claim 30 (new): An axial piston machine comprising:

at least one piston having a substantially cylindrical piston body, and a brace configured to receive at least one of a tilting ring and a tilting plate and piston shoes slidably disposed on the at least one of the tilting ring and the tilting plate, wherein the brace includes spherical cap-shaped depressions for receiving the piston shoes, the depressions being located on a first side of the brace adjacent the piston body and on a second side of the piston brace opposite the first side, wherein the substantially cylindrical piston body and the brace are separate parts assembled together to form the piston.

Claim 31 (new): An axial piston machine as recited in claim 30, wherein the axial piston machine includes an air-conditioner compressor for a motor vehicle.

Claim 32 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 30, wherein the brace includes a strip of sheet metal, and the piston body includes a deep-drawn part of sheet metal, the brace being connectable to the cylindrical piston body.

Claim 33 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 32, wherein the brace includes a punched opening.

Claim 34 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 32, wherein the spherical cap-shaped depressions are produced during a forming process of the brace.

Claim 35 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 30, wherein the brace and the piston body are formed from a steel material.

Claim 36 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 30, wherein the brace and the piston body are joined together by at least one of laser welding and resistance welding.

Claim 37 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 30, wherein the piston includes a substantially air tight hollow space between the brace and the piston body.

Claim 38 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 30, wherein the assembled piston includes a coating, wherein the coating includes a phosphate coat applied as an adhesive base in a layer thickness of about 2-3  $\mu\text{m}$ , and a PTFE coat applied as a second layer in a layer thickness of about 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Claim 39 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 30, wherein the piston brace includes a bridge connecting the first and second sides of the bridge and a first spherical recess disposed within the bridge.

Claim 40 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 39, wherein the piston shoes includes spherical running surfaces that merge into the first spherical recess.

Claim 41 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 40, wherein a first radius of the first spherical recess is equal to a running surface radius of the spherical running surfaces.

Claim 42 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 39, wherein the bridge includes a second spherical recess on an inner side having a larger radius than the first spherical recess, the second spherical recess being adapted to a contour of the at least one of the tilting ring and the tilting plate

Claim 43 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 42, wherein the second spherical recess enables the bridge to shift toward the at least one of the tilting ring and the tilting plate, respectively.

Claim 44 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 42, wherein due to the second spherical recess, a bending line of the brace is so close to the at least one of the tilting plate and the tilting ring, respectively, that a stiffness against bending during a suction movement is only slightly reduced compared to a brace without a first spherical recess.

Claim 45 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 30, wherein the brace defines an inner radial region facing the at least one of the tilting plate and the tilting ring and an outer side, and wherein the outer side includes a sliding surface having at least one opening to the inner radial region

Claim 46 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 45, wherein the at least one opening supplies a lubricant to the sliding surface.

Claim 47 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 45, wherein the at least one opening includes a plurality of differently shaped openings.

Claim 48 (new): The axial piston machine as recited in claim 45, wherein the sliding surface includes a pocket-shaped region formed in the sliding surface opposite a drive mechanism housing wall, the pocket shaped region providing a running surface, and being supplied via at least one opening.